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REMARKS

The Official Action dated February 23, 2005 has been received and its contents carefully noted. In view thereof, claims 2-4 have been canceled in their entirety without prejudice nor disclaimer of the subject matter set forth therein and claims 1, 5, 6 and 7 have been amended in order to better define that which Applicants regard as the invention. Accordingly, claims 1 and 5-10 are presently pending in the instant application.

Initially, Applicants wish to acknowledge the Examiner's indication on page 4 of the Official Action that claims 9 and 10 are allowable over the prior art of record and claims 2-8 have been objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims. In this regard, as can be seen from the foregoing amendments, the subject matter of previous dependent claim 4 has been incorporated into independent claim 1. Further, the dependency of claims 5, 6, and 7 have been amended to depend solely from independent claim 1 while claims 2-4 have been canceled. Accordingly, it is respectfully submitted that Applicants' claimed invention is now in proper condition for allowance.

With reference now to page 2 of the Office Action, claim 1 has been rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 6,490,859 issued to Kakuyama et al. This rejection is respectfully traversed in that the patent to Kakuyama neither discloses or suggests that which is presently set forth by Applicants' claimed invention.

Specifically, as can be seen from the foregoing amendments, independent claim 1 has been amended to include the subject matter of previous dependent claim 4 which has been indicated by the Examiner as being allowable over the prior art of record. Accordingly, it is respectfully submitted that independent claim 1 as well as those claims which depend therefrom now include subject matter indicated by the Examiner as being allowable over the

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prior art of record, and consequently is now in proper condition for allowance. Accordingly, further discussion with respect to the merits of the rejection of independent claim 1 is no longer believed to be warranted.

Therefore, in view of the foregoing it is respectfully requested that the objections and rejections of record be reconsidered and withdrawn by the Examiner, that claims 1 and 5-10 be allowed and that the application be passed to issue.

Should the Examiner believe a conference would be of benefit in expediting the prosecution of the instant application, he is hereby invited to telephone counsel to arrange such a conference.

Respectfully submitted,



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